**Mustard Gas to Anthrax**

Chemical warfare involves the use of toxic chemical substances as weapons. Chemical warfare is not new. Modern chemical warfare began in the First World War, when the German Army used mustard gas to burn soldiers in trenches throughout Europe. Various types of poisonous gas were used in both the First World War and Second World War. Chemical weapons are classified as being "unconventional" as they due not rely on an explosive force to injure or kill.

However, modern chemical weapons are increasingly sophisticated and complex. Soldiers today have to contend with a variety of deadly chemicals ranging from nerve agents to blister agents. One of the most deadly chemical weapons is sarin gas. Five hundred times more lethal than cyanide, sarin attacks the nervous system and has been known to kill people less than one minute after coming into contact with the gas.

The United Nations has identified about 70 different chemicals that can be used as weapons in modern combat scenarios. The most deadly chemical weapons are classified as "Lethal Unitary Chemical Agents and Munitions." These are the most hazardous weaponized chemicals.

**U.S. Stockpile of Chemical Weapons**

The U.S. stockpiles its chemical weapons at eight military bases located around the country. However, the exact location of the chemical weapons is classified information. The most dangerous chemical weapons stored by the U.S. are potent blister agents that cause severe skin and eye irritations. Although not part of conventional warfare, most militaries around the world stockpile various forms of chemical warfare agents.

Today, chemical weapons come in a variety of forms – including solid, gas and liquid. Chemical weapons are dispersed using several different techniques – ranging from bombs to aircrafts to the wind. Some chemical weapons are even dispersed using pyrotechnics and explosions. Many chemical weapons can remain in ground water and soil long after they are dispersed, making them a threat to civilian populations.

**Controversial Threat**

The use of chemical weapons is controversial and a moral issue for military and political leaders. Chemical, nuclear and biological warfare is known by the acronym "NBC," and makes-up the weapons classified as "unconventional threats" to soldiers and civilian populations. Military leaders around the world have stated publicly that chemical weapons pose one of the biggest threats to soldiers in modern combat.